

ADRIENNE A. JONES
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

10th Legislative District
Baltimore County



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The Maryland House of Delegates

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

May 23, 2019

The Honorable Boyd Rutherford
Lieutenant Governor
State House, State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. Miller, Jr.
Senate President
State House, State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Ms. Laura Mears
Chairman, State House Trust
100 Community Place, 3rd Floor
Crownsville, MD 21032

Dear State House Trust Members:

For over 150 years following the Civil War, Maryland has worked to recover from its difficult past as a state which was home to both Union and Confederate soldiers. The State Flag itself is a symbol of reconciliation and signifies the rebuilding of a once divided state. Maryland is also lucky to be the home to some of the greatest abolitionist leaders of all-time: Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass.

The Maryland State House has stood for over two hundred forty years and is a cornerstone of American history. I believe it is our duty to ensure this State House reflects truth in history for what it is, not what some may have wished it to be. On the first floor of the the State House, between the new and old House chambers, a plaque dedicated by the 1964 Maryland Civil War Centennial Commission reads:

“In commemorating the centennial of that great struggle between the citizens of the temporarily divided nation in the 1860’s the Maryland Civil War Centennial Commission did not attempt to decide who was right and who was wrong, or to make decisions on other controversial issues... By doing so it seeks to pay tribute to those who fought and died. As well as to the citizens who, during the Civil War, tried to do their duty as they saw it.”

The message projected by this plaque does not seek to correctly document history but instead sympathizes with Confederate motivations and memorializes Confederate soldiers. History clearly tells us that there was a right and a wrong side of the Civil War and “doing their duty as they saw it” does not give a pass to the cause these soldiers fought for.

I respectfully request the Maryland Civil War Centennial Commission plaque be removed – symbols of the Confederacy have no place in the State House. As the State House Trust, it is our obligation to continue to ensure that the State House grounds are a reflection of Maryland’s rich history and not a home to relics of the Confederacy.

Sincerely,

Adrienne A. Jones
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Speaker

cc: Elaine Bachmann, Maryland State Archives